

POLITICAL SPECTACLE AT THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This study was conducted to analyze the political spectacle in the presidential election in Indonesia in 2024. This research is a descriptive qualitative research. Data collection techniques through observation and documentation. The results of the observation were then analyzed in the semiotics of Barthes to find the meaning and myth of the political content of each candidate. The results of the analysis show that The political spectacle in the 2024 Indonesia presidential election certainly appears through gimmicks / dramas that are attractively packaged in every political show by the candidates. The three candidates presented a spectacle genre that greatly characterized their personal branding. Prabowo tried to show the humorous side of himself and seemed to show joyful politics through the "gemoy" dance. Anies builds the image of a leader with qualified intellectual capacity through the "Desak Anies" program. Ganjar built the most popular image by staying at residents' homes. Selling simplicity seems to often sell well in the political spectacle in Indonesia. Finally, political spectacle is always a sought-after spectacle, especially during the campaign period. The candidates are aware of the strong role of the media in leading opinions. Through the political spectacle, the candidates transform into actors who attract people to follow and even love them.

Keywords: Spectacle, Politic, Presidential Election, Semiotics

INTRODUCTION

During the general election period, political news became a commodity that sold well to be sold. The candidates then emerged as celebrities in political contests. The media became a stage for candidates to provide impressive performances for the masses, in order to attract attention and sympathy. (Kellner, 2003) mentioned that politics and social life are very interesting things to be watched by the media.

In the era of digital media, the media is very powerful in connecting many people in one issue/topic of discussion that is uniform and

simultaneously. This makes all things related to political contestation compete to be up in the media. Campaigns, debates, and feuds are always crowded in the mass media during the election period. Allan (2010:117) mentioned that indeed, politics and journalism are increasingly mediated by spectacle media. Political conflicts, campaigns, and other attention-grabbing events that we call "news" have all undergone the logic of spectacle and tabloids in the era of sensational media, infotainment, political scandals and contestations, seemingly endless culture wars.

The presidential election in Indonesia has become an interesting political contest and leaves a story in every period. The Indonesian presidential election in 2024 is full of spectacle with political diction satirizing each other. Three pairs of presidential and vice presidential candidates who advanced in this contest, namely number 1, Anies-Muhaimin, number 2, namely Prabowo-Gibran, and number 3 Ganjar-Mahfud. The three pairs became celebrities who stole the attention of the media during the general election period. They appear in the spectacle presented by the media starting from before the determination of candidates, the campaign period, the results of votes, to lawsuits and the determination of election results.

Spectacle is a permanent opium war formed for the power of the masses to equate goods with commodities and to complacency with survival that develops according to its own rules. The continuity of consumption must be constantly expanded by never stopping to include privacy, (Debord, 2004). The more this becomes a public discussion, the more the media continues the episodes of the spectacle.

Various spectacles in the presidential election in Indonesia in 2024, including those related to identity politics, development and closeness to the people, to ethical issues, namely nepotism, also enliven the mass media and social media. After "cebong" and "kampret" divided Indonesian society in the 2019 presidential election, in 2024 there will be other terms such as "anak abah", "gemoy", and "tuanku rakyat".

Based on data from the General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia (KPU RI) published by (Tribunnews.com, 2023), it shows that the millennial generation, generation X and gen Z are the majority voter categories in the 2024 election, as shown in the graph in the following figure.



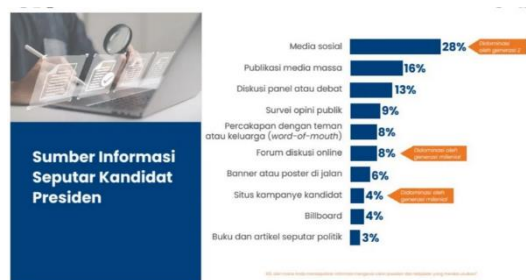
Picture 1. Voter category infographic by age

From this data, it is not surprising that candidate exposure on social media in the 2024 presidential election is very intensive. The official social media of each candidate is always active in sharing daily activities, hobbies, family intimacy and the candidate's religious side. In addition, the social media accounts of fans of each candidate also play an active role in displaying trending content related to candidates, such as mass crying, "gemoy" dances, to video clips of candidate statements in debates.



Picture 2. Gimmicks in candidate debates

(Kellner, 2003) said that in society, when the media focuses on celebrities, it seems that the public is fascinated by the problems and sufferings of these figures. So the media will place a celebrity figure as a victim by making a fuss about a conflict or creating a certain scandal. In addition to media workers, the candidates and the winning team are aware that they need to continue to get the media spotlight. There are two points of view, in the perspective of economic benefits for the media, and political interests for candidates. As a survey conducted by Populix, published by (AntaraneWS.com, 2024), shows that young voters become social media, mass media publications, and panel discussions/debates are the main references in the search for information on presidential candidates in the 2024 general election.



Hasil survei Populix terkait kecenderungan pemilih muda dalam mencari informasi tentang kandidat Pilpres 2024. (ANTARA/HO-Populix)

Picture 3. Survey related to the search for information on presidential candidates

The data supports the argument that candidates in the presidential election also try to always appear in the media. Both for imagery, engagement with voters, and to pursue FYP (for your page) or trending in conversations in cyberspace. Figural analysis is important because representations of popular cultural texts compose political images that are used to view and interpret various political processes, events, and personalities, (Kellner, 2010). Every thing that a candidate does in the presidential election is like a series that attracts every audience, an audience who is sometimes also a die-hard fan or haters. So that the results of the spectacle became a discussion and even a general debate in the community.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach, with a descriptive type of research. (Kriyantono, 2010) states that the type of descriptive research aims to make a systematic, factual and accurate description of the facts and characteristics of a certain population or object. Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation and observation. The observations carried out were in the form of content searches in online media related to the spectacle of presidential election candidates, which was then purposive sampling. The data analysis technique used refers to Barthes' semiotic analysis, namely the reading of signs in text at the level of denotation, connotation and myth. Through Barthes' semiotic analysis, researchers will find the political spectacle that occurred in the 2024 presidential election in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the 2024 presidential election in Indonesia, many interesting things even appeared as viral content on people's social media pages. For example, these various contents are related to the misuse of scientific terms, gimmicks in candidate debates, swear words spoken by candidates, the figure of a candidate for the first lady with her personality and background, the figure of a family man, closeness to the people, closeness to the younger generation, violations of ethics and the rule of law, past track record, identity politics, level

of religiosity, and even some hoax issues. In this study, the researcher selected three very representative spectacles carried out by presidential candidates who appeared during the campaign period.

Before answering the political spectacle, the researcher will first analyze semiotically. For Barthes, a text is a combination of writings, taken from different cultures, and entering a specific space, in which everything is centered and interacts in the form of dialogue, parody, contest arena, or allegory. This space according to Barthes is the reader, (Piliang, 2010). The researcher divided into 3 objects of meaning analysis in the performance of each candidate, which are as follows:

A. Prabowo Dances "Gemoy"



Denotation:

"Gemoy" is a slang word of the word "gemas". Gemas in KBBI shows a person's interest "very fond (love) mixed with irritation" (KBBI, n.d.-b). "Gemoy" is echoed by a typical sway performed by Prabowo and accompanied by a special campaign song. The use of AI in Prabowo Gibran's image makes the appearance of the two faces cartoon-like, this supports the concept of "gemoy". The dominating use of blue carries many meanings, as reported by (Merdeka.com, 2020) one of the meanings is to show a sense of security, confidence and tranquility, besides that it is also mentioned that blue is the favorite color of many people.

Connotation:

Displaying the figure of a leader who is popular with many people, who follows the times, is close to the younger generation, and utilizes the latest technology, shows that politics is relaxed and not too serious. Prabowo, with his military background and past stories associated with human rights violations, always carries an authoritarian image. This image is certainly detrimental and inappropriate for a democratic country. In this election, Prabowo tried to break this image to show that he was quite humorous and relaxed. He is not as rigid as imagined because he can dance. In addition to showing Prabowo's relaxed side, it also shows that despite being the oldest candidate compared to other

candidates, Prabowo is young at heart and also answered doubts about Prabowo's health to be able to lead the country.

Myth:

Prabowo with his "gemoy" dance breaks the authoritarian image and shows that he is quite fun to be a leader.

B. The sound of change in the stage “Desak Anies”



Denotation:

"Desak" in KBBI shows a situation full of cramming (KBBI, n.d.-a). This situation is illustrated by the enthusiasm of the people present. "Desak Anies" is a campaign program that provides space for the public to urge Anies to answer questions related to problems. The voice of change that has become a jargon is also in line with the full cramming of people who "complain" to Anies.

Connotation:

Echoing the change, Anies took the positioning as an opposition that showed that the government had failed and a new leader was needed. Associated with two other pairs of candidates who are considered to be still "connected" to the old president, Anies shows that he is the only one who is different. With an educational background, he also wants to show that intelligent leaders are needed who are able to solve the country's problems. A leader who can answer clearly every question which is related to President Jokowi who often gives answers that do not answer.

Myth:

Indonesia is not doing well, change is needed and smart leaders are needed who are able to answer people's problems.

C. "Tuanku Rakyat": Ganjar stays at residents' houses



Jawa, Bicara 17th Ganjar MahJad, Ayo Sero Bepeloro memuatkan alai capere nomor und 3 Ganjar Pranowo yang menginap di rumah warga belandaan gremes belaka. Foto: Dok MP

Denotation:

"Tuanku Rakyat" was echoed by Ganjar followed by a breakthrough of "staying at people's houses". "Tuan" in KBBI is interpreted as a person who serves the place, while "rakyat" is defined as a resident of a country/ordinary person/common person (KBBI, n.d.-c). So that "Tuanku Rakyat" carries the message that Ganjar is a servant / servant for the people. Staying in a fairly simple resident's house, with walls whose paint has peeled off and without a lampshade. This shows that there is no boundary between Ganjar and the people so that he is a leader who is not arrogant.

Connotation:

Displaying the figure of a leader who not only hears but also feels directly the lives of his people so that he will fight for the interests of the people because in fact the leader is a servant of the people. Not thirsty for power and solely want to serve the people.

Myth:

Leaders work for the people, not for the benefit of a certain group or for the pursuit of power.

Spectacle as a part of presidential election

From the three forms of performances carried out by candidates in the presidential election that have been analyzed through semiotics, we know that things related to politics become interesting commodity materials to be used as spectacles. As it is written (Ama La Nora, 2014) that a political leader can be orbited to the top of power, on the contrary, he can be mired in problems when the mass media operation plays existing opinions.

In the theory of democratic political science, general elections are a rational procedure in which candidates compete for public office by presenting themselves to voters as the person who is most able to execute a set of proposals for future development, (Beng Huat, 2007). From the results of the analysis carried out between the three candidates, they have built a different

self-image between each other. This is interesting because each candidate shows that in determining the leader there are many versions that are considered the best.

The political spectacle of Prabowo emphasizes efforts to attract the attention of the younger generation to see the other side of himself. Prabowo has appeared to the public to show his existence and desire to lead this country for the past 20 years. But only in this period, Prabowo displayed a different image. Prabowo was previously known to be synonymous with his passionate speeches, military background, horses, and a distinctive safari cream shirt full of authority. This figure then underwent changes with all the "gemoy" performances, as if it could erase memories related to the previous figure of Prabowo. However, this managed to attract the attention of the public, both fans and haters. Especially novice voters / generation Z who have no experience with the 1998 reform.

Other candidates are also competing to create a political spectacle. Anies with his narratives of change continues to show his passion to renovate the government. With an academic background and qualified public speaking skills, Anies builds a personal image as if he is a leader who has intellectual capacity to answer problems. Compared to other candidates, of course, this only exists for Anies with his previous background as an academic. The program "desak Anies" with the personal branding that is built, strengthening each other. Of course, this attracts the attention of the public, especially those who are disappointed with the Jokowi government, disappointed with ethical violations.

The two candidates have displayed different sides of the form of an attractive leader who should be needed at this time. The third candidate also emerged with a different perspective on what a leader should be. Ganjar made "tuankku rakyat" a jargon that really describes him. Describing that his desire as a leader is solely to serve, contradicts the view that the presidential election is a power struggle. A simple leader is what the people expect, in this view Ganjar is confident to go directly to the community and even stay at residents' houses. Of course, not all guests can stay at someone's house, so if Ganjar can do that, he is giving a show about a leader who is very close to his people. It shows how much he is loved by his citizens. Ganjar showed his seriousness to absorb the aspirations of the community by experiencing the 'life' of the community itself. This can invite admiration or it can also be disgusting with imagery games that are similar to the theme of recent years.

Debord in (Kellner, 2003) mentioned that when the real world turns into a simple image, the simple image becomes a real and effective motivation of hypnotic behavior. That's how the political spectacle is used in presidential elections. The public becomes an audience who follows the drama series of the candidate, not always because of their fans but sometimes only because of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out). Like a drama series that should not be missed.

CONCLUSION

The political spectacle in the 2024 Indonesia presidential election certainly appears through gimmicks / dramas that are attractively packaged in every political show by the candidates. Candidates are political actors who weave stories to attract the attention of the audience to follow every episode of their political spectacle. The three candidates presented a spectacle genre that greatly characterized their personal branding. Prabowo is showing another side of himself to change the trust issue against him. Prabowo with a "gemoy" dance shows that he is not as rigid as people have judged him so far. Joyful politics has succeeded in attracting the attention of the public because it is the answer from people who are tired of hearing political promises every campaign. Another is Anies' political spectacle, which thinks that Indonesia is not doing well. Indonesia needs change with leaders who have intellectual capabilities to lead. Through the "Desak Anies" program, he showed his readiness to provide solutions to problems in the community. Another candidate, Ganjar, is still in the format of an image of a popular leader. Ganjar still gives a political spectacle that shows simplicity, he seems to believe that people are still deceived by the politics of "people" imagery. Finally, political spectacle became a drama series whose episodes did not break even with plot twists that sometimes the audience did not predict. Political spectacle is used to perpetuate the interests of candidates so that it is always viral content in the media.

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